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Message Text

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45
ACTION NEA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SP-01 L-01 H-01 PRS-01 NSC-05

NSCE-00 EB-03 NEAE-00 SSO-00 INR-05 INRE-00 RSC-01

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5161

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 0143

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EAID, IS
SUBJECT: ISRAELI AID REQUEST FOR FY 76

1. MINISTER OF FINANCE RABINOWITZ CALLED ON ME TODAY TO PRESENT ANNUAL COLORED PAPER (BLUE THIS YEAR) WHICH SETS FORTH ISRAEL'S REQUEST FOR ASSISTANCE FOR FY 76. HE WAS ACCOMPANIED BY DIRECTOR GENERAL AGMON, ECONOMIC ADVISER DOVRAT AND HEAD ECONOMIC DIVISION FOREIGN MINISTRY MOSHE ALLON. HE EXPRESSED THE DEEP GRATITUDE OF THE GOI FOR THE GENEROUS MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID THE U.S. HAD EXTENDED IN THE PAST.

2. I POINTED OUT TO THEM THAT I HAD NOTICED THAT THEY HAD ALREADY GIVEN THE INFORMATION TO THE MEDIA FOR IT HAD APPEARED BOTH IN THE PRESS AND ON THE RADIO TODAY. RABINOWITZ REPLIED THAT THE SOURCE OF THOSE STORIES WAS THE UNITED STATES AND IMPLIED THAT ONCE AGAIN ISRAELI EMBASSY HAD JUMPED THE GUN BY LEAKING FIGURES TO PRESS. RABINOWITZ ASSURED ME THAT THE PAPER HAD NOT YET BEEN DELIVERED IN WASHINGTON BUT WOULD BE PRESENTED THERE TODAY.

3. I THANKED THE MINISTER FOR HIS COURTESY IN FURNISHING ME WITH A COPY OF THE PAPER AT THE SAME TIME IT WAS BEING PRESENTED IN WASHINGTON. I COMMENTED THAT THE REQUESTED AID, HOWEVER OF
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$2.59 BILLION REPRESENTED A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE OVER FY 75 FUNDING

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LEVELS. WHILE WE ARE ACUTELY CONSCIOUS OF ISRAELS FINANCIAL PROBLEMS, IN FACE OF SERIOUS SITUATION IN UNITED STATES WITH UNEMPLOY-

MENT OVER 7 PER CENT, BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DIFFICULTIES, GENERAL ANTICI-

PATED REDUCTIONS IN SUCH SENSITIVE DOMESTIC AREAS AS HEALTH,EDUCATION

AND WELFARE PLUS GROWING UNPOPULARITY OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, IT WOULD NOT BE EASY TO ACCEDE TO THE ISRAELI REQUEST. ALTHOUGH ISRAEL WAS HIGHLY REGARDED IN CONGRESS BY BOTH POLITICAL PARTIES, IN ALL CANDOR I FELT IT WOULD BE A MIRACLE IF ISRAEL RECEIVED MORE IN FY 76 THAN IN FY 75. I NEVERTHELESS WOULD TRANSMIT FIGURES TO WASHINGTON WITH REQUEST THEY BE GIVEN EVERY CONSIDERATION.

4. IN RESPONSE, MINISTER RABINOWITZ SAID THAT ISRAELIS LIVE IN A LAND WHERE MIRACLES TAKE PLACE. ALTHOUGH GOI WAS AWARE OF DIFFICULTIES FACING THE U.S. AND SOME OF THE PREVAILING ATTITUDES, THEY WERE HOPEFUL THAT THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE CONGRESS WOULD BE ABLE TO FULFILL THE ISRAELI REQUEST.

5. MORE DETAILED COMMENT WILL FOLLOW PROMPTLY AFTER ANALYSIS OF FIGURES
KEATING

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, APPROPRIATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 08 JAN 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: MartinML
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TELAV00143
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750007-1046
From: TEL AVIV
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750168/aaaachmu.tel
Line Count: 84
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: MartinML
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 07 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <07 AUG 2003 by WorrelSW>; APPROVED <26 NOV 2003 by MartinML>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
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Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ISRAELI AID REQUEST FOR FY 76
TAGS: EAID, IS
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006